

**SOUTH FLORIDA WATER MANAGEMENT DISTRICT
SITUATION REPORT #06
Water Supply Contingency Plan Implementation-2000
Wednesday, January 17, 2001 – 1600 Hours**

This report contains the latest information. Revisions are in bold. Please refer to previous situation reports for past information. Note: Next situation Report –January 31, 2001.

Situation:

The South Florida Water Management District has declared Phase II water shortage restrictions for Monroe, Miami-Dade, Broward, Palm Beach, Collier, Lee and Hendry Counties. Phase III water restrictions have been imposed for agricultural users in the Lake Okeechobee Basin and the Indian Prairie Basin, Phase II water restrictions for non-agricultural users in the Lake Okeechobee Basin and modified Phase II restrictions for Orange County.

WEATHER CONDITIONS:

Short Term:

Below average rain expected over Lake Okeechobee.

Long Term:

Increased chance of below average rainfall during the dry season, especially during the November through March period when 90% of average rainfall is expected based on historical rainfall.

WATER CONDITIONS:

Kissimmee Chain of Lakes:

On average, the lakes in the Kissimmee Chain of Lakes are approximately 0.3 to almost 3.7 feet below average. Lake Alligator has fallen to a record low stage.

Lake Istokpoga

Lake Istokpoga is at approximately 37. **67** feet NGVD, which is about 1.1 foot below average for this time of year.

Lake Okeechobee Service Area

Lake Okeechobee is at approximately **10.94** feet NGVD, which is about **3.7** feet below average for this time of year. Canals in the Everglades Agriculture Area are at very low stages and are being operated to provide the authorized water supply allocation to water users in the basin.

Water Conservation Areas (WCAs)

Stages in Water Conservation Area 1 are between approximately 0.9 feet below schedule and about average for this time of year. Water Conservation Area 2 is **0.3 foot above the regulation schedule and is about 1.1 feet** below average for this time of year. Stages in Water Conservation Area 3 are about **0.9** feet below schedule and approximately **0.2** feet **above** average.

Lower East Coast

Canal water levels along the Lower East Coast are at normal dry season stages. Water supply releases from the WCAs continue to help maintain canal stages, particularly in Broward County and in the LWDD. The canals in St. Lucie area are about 0.5 foot above their water supply minimum levels.

OPERATIONAL STATUS:

The District's EOC remains at a level 2 (partial) activation. The Citizen Information Line is activated during normal business hours (0830 hours to 1630 hours).

TEAM REPORTS:

WATER OPERATIONS:

- Revised Lake Okeechobee supply side management reference stage to 9.57 feet.

Operation Support:

- Forward pumping installation and manufacturing on schedule – all pumps have been tested.
- 21,000 acre burn of torpedo grass (Buckhead Ridge) complete.
- Request from Florida Game and Freshwater Fish Commission for support of prescribed burn for Holeyland and Rottenberger area.

WATER SHORTAGE IMPLEMENTATION

Variance/Temporary Pump

- To date, received 113 requests for variances, approved 59.
- Received and approved one temporary pump authorization

Compliance/Enforcement

- Six training sessions held for local law enforcement
- 700 tickets/warning reported issued by local law enforcement

Modified Water Supply Delivery Plans

- Revised irrigated acreage calculations based on undercounting from database (net increase of 15%). Revised weekly allocation ratio for citrus to increase proportion of water assigned based on higher efficiency of micro irrigation method employed.
- As a result of 1) increase acreage, 2) the redistribution of water to citrus, and 3) the severity of the rainfall deficit, water supply to row crops would be cut back to approximately 60 to 70%.
- The reference level of Lake Okeechobee was dropped to 9.6 feet based on the factors above. Allocations were adjusted to reflect the new reference elevation.
- Public meeting held regarding Lake Istokpoga and Indian Prairie. Public supported the concept of an expedited lake drawdown and clean up this spring.
- The Governing Board ordered water use terminated in the upper Indian Prairie Basin per Rule 40E-22, but directed staff to implement a variance based water use protocol.

Water Use Evaluation

- Selected urban utilities were notified of the need to collect and submit weekly water use data.
- Coordinated with Operations and Data Management to correct difference in water flow numbers from the same structures at the same time within the Lake Okeechobee service area. This was due to differing measuring protocols.
- Initial results suggest compliance is reasonable within the EAA, but not so good in the C-43 and C-44 basins where citrus is dominant. Compliance should improve with the adjustment to the citrus allocation discussed above.

MONITORING AND ASSESSMENT

- Developing methodology for flow of Lake Okeechobee Service Area.
- Documenting ground water levels and water discharge in LEC and WCAs.
- Producing monthly drought reports for EOC and Governing Board
- Producing daily Lake Okeechobee flow estimates report.
- Monitoring water quality of flow reversals to Lake Okeechobee.

INTERGOVERNMENTAL COORDINATION

- Presentation to Lower East Coast Water Supply Plan Advisory Committee on water shortage on 1/3/01. Committee recommended elevating to Phase II restrictions in Lower East Coast area.
- Participated in drought teleconference with Florida Division of Emergency Management and all Water Management Districts on 1/4/01.
- Conducted teleconference with St. Johns River Water Management District on 1/05/01 to coordinate declaration of Phase II restrictions in Orange County.
- Conducted compliance/enforcement workshop for Monroe County on 1/08/01.
- Briefed the Governing Board on Lake Okeechobee water shortage issues at the Board Workshop in Belle Glade on 1/10/01.
- Presented three motions for Board approval at the regular Board meeting in West palm Beach on 1/11/01.
 - Phase II restrictions for Lower East coast
 - Phase II for non-agricultural users of Lake Okeechobee water
 - Modified Phase II restrictions for Orange County
- Presentation on water shortage to Broward County Technical Advisory Committee to the Water Advisory Board on 1/13/01.

Environmental Assessment

- Pursuing funding options with other agencies and examining engineering and logistics requirements for potential in-kind assistance to Lake Istokpoga draw down.
- Coordinating with Florida Freshwater Fish and Game Commission for a prescribed burn at Holeyland and Rottenberger tracks.
- Performed assessment of environmental conditions throughout the system, looking at past three months and anticipated conditions over the next three months for letter to Florida Department of Environmental Protection.

- Reviewed temporary deviation of the regulation schedule for WCA-2A and determined there would be minimal environmental impacts from the change.
- Reviewed design for steel mesh barriers for the temporary forward pumps to prevent manatees from being entrained in the pumps.
- Continuing to assess potential impacts and operational and/or structural modifications to prevent movement of Asian swamp eels into Everglades National Park.
- Requested information from the Everglades Construction Project on the potential impacts if the Stormwater Treatment Areas (STAs) dry out on phosphorus loads upon re-wetting. Requested staff to determine how this would be accommodated under existing permits and the Settlement Agreement.
- Assessing the impacts of using some amount of groundwater to keep the STAs hydrated on the STA vegetation communities and phosphorus removal performance.

EMERGENCY MANAGMENT

- Citizen Information phone line received approximately 5,053 calls.
- Installed EM2000 software at service centers and water shortage management team members to assist in tracking variance request and other information requested on the drought.

Finance/Procurement

- Executed contract to provide submersible pump installation services at lake structures S-351, S-352, and S-354 to Lucas Marine Construction.
- Awarded RFQ for media buying services to two vendors: GRT Ad Services (east coast media coverage) and Media Right (west coast media coverage).
- Issued solicitation to provide manatee protection screens during forward pumping operations at lake structures S-351, S-352 and S-354.

Legal

- Prepared Water Shortage Orders for Lower East Coast (Phase II) restrictions – issued 1/11/01, effective 1/17/01.
- Prepared water shortage order (#2001-02) for Lake Okeechobee non-agricultural (Phase II) restrictions – issued 1/11/01, effective 1/19/01.
- Prepared water shortage order (#2001-03) for Orange County Phase II restrictions in conjunction with St. Johns River WMD – issued 1/11/01, effective 1/16/01.
- Prepared an order for Governing Board concurrence with water shortage variances granted for orders, on January consent agenda.
- Conducting legal research on navigation issues, primarily within Lake Okeechobee and tributaries, regarding liability for damage and property impacts, and legal duty to maintain navigability during droughts.

COMMUNICATIONS

- Issued press release on 1/11/01 on emergency order imposing mandatory Phase II restrictions for the Lower East Coast.
- Press conference held on 1/11/01 at District's headquarters for West Palm Beach -Miami media.
- Ten media interviews held at District's headquarters Beach with the Executive Director and various members of the management team.
- Approximately 50 media contacts
- Miami/Dade Service Center director also held interviews with Miami TV stations as well as Hispanic radio and television outlets.
- Continue to answer press questions on enforcement and water use.
- Public service announcements for TV stations are being sent out to service center directors for distribution.
- Media buy of television and radio stations will take effect after 1/15/01.

Signed: _____

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